101 classifies the Bakela (or Boyela), who are unquestionably pure Mongo, among the Wakutshu [Wakusu] or Batetela is highly significant.

161 It is impossible to give an exact figure for the size of the population we have just defined. In any case one can estimate that it is more than a million.

184 Throughout the huge territory occupied by this people, only insignificant differences in institutions or language can be observed. Greater divergences appear in the material manifestations of culture.

101 In my opinion it is likely that certain groups which belong among the Nkundo-Mongo as far as culture and speech are concerned, 563 may be distinguished from them in genealogy and history. Among these are the true Elima or riverain people (the Bolóki, the Eleku, the Elimgá of the upper Lomela and the upper Tshuapa), (2) the Ngombe tribes

2. We exclude a few Libinja and Basoko clans living near Coquilhatville, since they are clearly of alien origin. The native name for the Tshuapa [River] is Jwafa or Jafa and, higher up, Lwafa. Among the Bongando and the Bahamba it is called the Laha.

of the Lomela, the Mbole, the Bakutu of the Lomela-Tshuapa (with whom one should probably include the Ntombá and the Nkole), (3)

3. See my article in Congo, 1931, Vol.1, pp. 21 ff.

and perhaps also the Mpámá and the Losakanyi. (4). This likelihood

4. The latter are erroneously called Losakanja by Father Schebesta in Vollblutneger und Halbzwerge, p. 199. They seem to have lived formerly on the lower Momboyo River (Lulaka); the land on which Flandria Mission has been established still bears their name.

M 101 does not exclude the possibility of a distant kinship, but the present 563 state of our knowledge makes the solution to this question impossible; for very close resemblances may be explained by a common origin as well as by a period of living in close contact, and differences may be due to diverse origins [5] or to a temporary separation at a certain point in history.

P M 101 563 144 A considerable number of Pygmoids or Pygmiforms (1) (Batswá, Jõfe, Balúmbe, Bilángi, Boné) are to be found scattered among the Nkundó. They share a community of social and economic interests with their "masters." The Botswá belongs to his master and depends on him, but he is not, strictly speaking, his slave. His master not only has rights over him; he also has obligations to fulfill. Most of the Pygmoids are to be found in the western part of Nkundó territory; in the east they are very rare.

1. This name was proposed by Father Schebesta, op. cit., p. 170.

M 101 173 The Nkundó-Mongo came from the north or northeast, while the Mbólé claim to have come from the northwest, and the Bakutu from the west. (2)

2. See my study, previously cited, passim.

M 101 A word should be said about the name of these people. Ordinarily, we call them the Nkundó-Mongo. The first of these names is used in the west and in the south, the second especially in the north and in the east. The Elángá of the Losanganya region are called the Mongo éâ Lolo, or the Upstream Mongo, by the peoples to the west of them. Foreigners call all these peoples, including the Nkundó, the Mbólé, the Bakutu, etc., by the name of Mongo. In literature one sometimes encounters the name of Lolo or Balolo. (3) But, as we have seen, lolo is not a proper noun but simply the word meaning "upstream"

3. For example, the name of the Protestant mission of the Lulonga is "Congo Balolo Mission."

101 We have excluded the majority of these groups from the scope of our study and have confined ourselves to a territory limited as follows: it is bound in the north by the Ruki-Tshuapa; in the east by the Salonga as far as the Mbɔlé boundary; in the south by a line running from the junction of the Luilaka and the Lwɪle to the northern boundary of the Bombwanja of the Lokolɔ and then to the boundary of the Ekonda; in the west by the Boloko, a tributary of the Ruki. In other words, we are considering only a very small part of the territory of the Nkundɔ tribes. But [8] it is the only part we have been able to investigate thoroughly. We are including the Bombwanja and the Elɪngá who have settled in the area thus outlined.

101 563 The Elɪngá live only along the big rivers. In our area they include in addition to the true Elɪngá (of whom there are only about ten clans belonging to the Bolɔki group, who have settled between Ikɛngɛ and Bokɛle and Mpakú, and the four or five Eleku villages on the Salonga), the Nkɔle and Ekonda (1) villages who have adopted

1. Related respectively to the Nkɔle of the Lokolɔ and the Ekonda of Lake Leopold II.

the way of life and customs of the Elíngá. (2)

2. See the data on the history and life of the Elɪngá published by Father Boelaert, M.S.C., in Congo, 1935, Vol. 2, p. 705.

As to the Bombwanja, their clans may be found scattered throughout the area. They are more or less dependent on clans of other peoples with whom they live and form hamlets of a sort in a great many villages. A solid bloc of them is to be found in the vicinity of Bokátola. It is constituted as an independent district [chefferie] even though, according to "custom," it "belongs" as a julɛ (pl. baulɛ), "subject," or "subjugated clan" (the verb is uja) to certain Bokɔtɛ villages or groups. (3) It is quite possible that these

3. The same is true of the Bombwanja group of the Lokolɔ. Other clans are scattered

101
563

among the Elãngã beyond the Tshuapa. All of them are beyond the scope of this study. The Bombwanja are divided into Basunɛ and Bonkoso, and the Boeɛdɛ are considered their bɔnankãnã (sister's son).

Bombwanja were originally Mbɔlɛ, for certain words and idioms in their dialect are reminiscent of the Lombɔlɛ.

Let us briefly enumerate the other tribes -- "pure" Nkundɔ --
101 619 who form the subject of this study:

1. The Injɔlɔ, "sister's son" (bonankãnã) of the Ntɔmbã and the Bolɛngɛ who live beyond the Boloko. They are divided into three groups [9] -- Engɔnjɔ, Wesɛ, and Ngombe, (1) each of which comprises

> 1. West of their territory are to be found the remains of a group of former inhabitants of the area, whom the present inhabitants call Tompoko (or Basɛkã Bofãka lɛlɛkɛ) but who are completely unknown to me.

a subdistrict [sous-chefferie] for administrative purposes. A small segment is to be found outside the area under discussion, between the Boloko and Coq. (2)

> 2. The southern Injɔlɔ are often called Imoma.

2. The Boãngĩ (and their subgroup, the Besombɔ), related to the Bokãla of the Losanganya region. (3)

[114]

> 3. On the ethnographic map of the Belgian Congo prepared and published by Dr. J. Maes, the territory of the Boangi is marked with the name "Bokuala." There is no tribe or village by that name. Unless an insulting and humiliating nickname (bokwala, "slave") is involved, the name may result from an erroneous use of the name of the present chief of the Boangi, Bokwãla.

101
619 9. The Bongale. Three large villages belonging to this group are to be found in the territory under discussion. In order of their size they are: Bongale wă Botólô (among the Lifumba, between the Bonsómbé, Lolíma and Saísi rivers), Bongale wă Ilinga (among the Bakíaía, near Ikéngé), and Bongale wă Bosongú (among the Bonkoso, near Bempumba). The difference between their rules of exogamy and those of the other tribes confirms the view that the Bongale are not true Nkundó. (2)

[569]

2. See Chapter V, Article III. There are several other small Bongale groups, but I do not know whether they are related to those mentioned above. Among them are those living near Bonyeka (Busira) among the Boíngi (Bokíla, Boénjola). They may be descended from different ancestors who all bore the name Ngale. The same name may indicate an identical origin, but it may also be derived from different individuals whose names were the same. This statement is generally applicable.

The tribes living between the Jwalé and the Boloko, with whom the Bolénge and the Ntómbá between the Congo and the Boloko are sometimes classified, are grouped under the general name of Ilínga by the Boíngí, Injólo, and Elínga. (3)

[114] 3. The Bokele tribe listed on the above-mentioned map does not exist. Could this error be due to an incorrect extension of the name of a Boloki village near Bokíma which is called Bokélé?

The Nkundó-Móngo came from the north or the northeast. (4)

[825] 4. The following note may be of interest: The stories and songs of the Nkundó indicate a

583 x 431 and, if the woman's family is wealthy, a goat and formerly even a slave. Nowadays, objects of European manufacture are also given.

● 563 To give the impression of being a great lord, an unusually wealthy family head sometimes gave human beings as a dowry. These were preferably Batswá or, if possible, dependents (Mpámá) who only changed masters up to a certain point. Actually it was the father's intention to glorify his daughter by turning them over to her; they had to assist her through various services, and her descendants became their "owners."

Thus Mpumo, one of the ancestors of the Boéndé (of the Bomwanja tribe) had received the slave, Bonkótulá, as part of the nkomí from Ikólé, father of his wife, [152] Lifomi of Mbúngá (Liókó, Ekonda). The descendants of this slave comprise the Bonkótambélá and Batsína clan [sic], who have settled with the Bosánjo and the Bongangá. (1)

1. See also the example cited in Chapter III, Article V.

583 x 431 425 Even real estate can be included in the nkomí. Thus a fishing territory (such as a stream, creek, pond, fishing holes) or a section of a palm grove may be given (2). Like the gift of human beings,

2. But never land or forests.

such property is given only by a very wealthy family head. If he is not sole owner (and in practice he can be only in the case of fishing territory), he must obtain in advance the consent of the co-owners, whether they be brothers or heads of other families. Since it must be assumed that he is intelligent enough not to give away a piece of property which they themselves need, he always obtains their consent. In fact, anyone who opposed the gift would be considered to have acted maliciously toward the woman, who is also his "daughter," in depriving her of this source of pride.

The objects given as nkomí are the property of the husband. The greatest part of it he gives to his wife's nkólo, that is to the

583x The expression for being the object of a bride-price payment is kwɛ̂ bafimbɛ́, literally, "to make valuables fall." Hence the name ɔ̌kwâfimbɛ́, "one who is the object of a payment of valuables."

As we have said, it is possible to make all the payments described at the same time. This is done only in the case of remarriage. All the valuables are handed over at the same time, and there is no longer any distinction between the three payments.

## Article IX. The Bosɔ́ngo

1. The nature of the bosɔ́ngo and the relevant terminology

The bosɔ́ngo is the last portion of the bride price. It consists of the payment of a slave or the equivalent value in currency. Hence the very common term bonto, which strictly speaking means "man" but is used to mean "slave" ("He is only a man, "they say; that is to say, a slave; njɔ̌ɔ́ta la bonto, la linto, "I possess him as a slave"). The word which actually means "slave," bokwɛ́la, or bontamba among the Elíngɛ́ and the Bodyɛ́, (1) is never used in relation to the bride price.

1. Elsewhere the terms bɔɔ́mbo or bɔ̌mbo are also used.

The Ekonda, however, do use the term ilengɛ́, which is a synonym of bokwɛ́la and means "slave" in the strict sense of the word. The neighboring Nkundɔ́ tribes also use it, probably as a result of their influence. The Bombwanja, the Bongfili, the Bonkoso, and the Bombomba likewise do so. (2)

[563]

2. The Batswɛ́ never make this payment.

[192] The noun bosɔ́ngo (lisɔ́ngɛ́ among the various Elíngɛ́ groups) is derived from sɔ́ng, "to pay this part of the bride price." Thus a man will say to his son-in-law, ɔ̂ɔ́ɛ́l'ɔ́ɛ́nga bɔ̌n'ɔ̌kámɛ́, yákáká yɔ̌sɔ́ngɛ́, "You have already paid the jɛ́ngí for my daughter; now come [158] and pay the bosɔ́ngo." The definition given by Ruskin (Dictionary of the Lomongo Language, p. 67: "bosɔ́ngo: the passing over of a

589x daughter or ward in marriage without reference to her wishes, money paid for a slave wife," and p. 314, sɔ̃ngya: the same) therefore does not correspond to the sense in which these terms are used by the Nkundɔ́ tribes under discussion.

Another term for this payment is tsinola bonto (ilengɛ́). I know of no other use of the verb tsinola.

An expression which brings out the idea of its being a last payment is kumbola bonto (ilengɛ́). The verb kumbola means to strike the last blow in felling a tree. (1)

[192]

1. Note that kumbola also means "to take in marriage."

Formerly, the payment of a real slave, that is, of a human being, was absolutely obligatory. Nowadays, since slavery has been abolished, the worth of a slave in bakonga has been substituted; it consists of 25 rings, or of 15 to 20 if they are especially beautiful. (2)

[567] [435]

2. In the past, the price of a slave was from 10 to 15 rings.

To distinguish between these forms of the bosɔ̃ngo, the Nkundɔ́ say bont'ɔ̆w'abwɔ́ (ilengɛ́ y'ă̆bwɔ́), "a slave with hair," therefore a human being, or bont'ɔ̆w'akonga (ilengɛ́ y'ă̆konga), "slave in copper rings."

583x 563 Batswá, instead of slaves, could be given as bosɔ̃ngo. They were not reduced to slavery, however, but remained in the same position as before, except that they changed masters.

Sometimes a master who wanted to be rid of an incorrigible Botswá gave him away as a real slave in a bosɔ̃ngo; in that case it was as if a slave in the strict sense of the word had been given.

In other instances the master acted with the more or less explicit consent of the Botswá. Those who were thus handed over as a bride-price payment were usually women. [159] Since in matrimonial matters of the Batswá, the Bootɔ́ master fulfills the role of "Father," he is entitled to the girls' bride price and has the duty of

583x 563 obtaining wives for the boys. Therefore he can turn a Botswá girl belonging to him over to his father-in-law. The father-in-law never takes this woman as his wife or as a wife for one of his relatives; but he gives her in marriage to one of his own Batswá or to a stranger of that race who pays him a bride price for her. Socially and financially the result is exactly the same as if the son-in-law had made his payment in the form of a slave.

Thus the bride price paid by Lokonda jw'ísano y'ánkanja of Ngombe (Bongíli) for Bakutu of the Basékâ Elongama (Besombó, Bombwanja) and used by the latter's cousin, Bofénda of Ekákola (Bongíli) to obtain for wife, Iloa of Ndongó (Bongíli), consisted of 60 rings and the woman Ómâmenga (Antonia) of the Mbálanga clan of Botswá. Ómâmenga was later married to Wanja (Pius), a Botswá belonging to her new masters.

[567] There may be two or more slaves, for the same reasons that determine the size of the walo. The Bombwanja are only exceptionally satisfied with a single one. But all the slaves always comprise a single bosóngo.

583x The bosóngo is not part of the jéngí. The natives say bosóngo émí ík'omóngó, "the bosóngo is entirely separate." Their statements on this subject are markedly categorical.

A characteristic expression which designates the entire bride price is bámbá la bonto, "rings and a man" (slave). The rings are the jéngí; they are valuables of a purely material nature. The bosóngo is, on the contrary, a human being.

There is no term in Lonkundo which covers both kinds of payments. The whole cannot be expressed precisely in a single word.

583x 178 In the vicinity of Flandria, however, the young people [160] are beginning to confuse the two words jéngí and bosóngo and to use one in place of the other. (1) [Editor's note: The confusion today is

1. The young people from Injólo who are about twenty years of age and whom I have known at Flandria Mission and in their own settlements, do not confuse these terms but distinguish clearly between them.

## Chapter V. Obstacles to Marriage

M 582 There is no specific term in Lonkundo for an "obstacle to marriage." General terms are used, as in our European languages.

Our people make no distinction between obstacles which nullify a marriage and those which are prohibitive in nature. Therefore, we will simply speak of obstacles without making any distinctions among them.

### Article I. "Race"

M P 582 The question of a diversity of races can be considered only with reference to the Batswá. Marriages with them are strictly for- 563 bidden. Nkundó rules of behavior are very strict with respect to relations between Baotó and Batswá. It is unheard of that opposite sexes of the two races should mingle, even for a simple conversation. There would then obviously be no question of marriage.

M P 563 588 Among the Bilángi, a Batswá tribe of the Injólo of the Salonga-Lulaka (who absolutely refuse to be called Batswá or Balúmbe), there have been two cases of such unions to my knowledge. Two Baotó women were involved, both, by a singular coincidence, from Lotángonda (Injólo, Engónjo). One was Njalí, daughter of Yole and sister of Lomúlu, the other Nsombola, sister of Limpema.

Njalí was taken in marriage by Bakáo of Ikindatói. She wanted children desperately and, not having had any by her two successive Nkundó husbands, she ran away to the Bilángi in hopes of having better luck there. [242] She was not disappointed in her expectations. She gave birth to four sons: the eldest, Bonkono, who died some years ago; Bakao (Georges), who died in 1933; two sons, Bonkoni (Louis) and Joke (Henri), who are still alive. In 1933 the descent of the four numbered thirteen sons, six daughters, four grandsons, and one granddaughter. But there was never a legitimate marriage between Bakao and Njalí since no bride price was paid. And the descent have formed a small Bilángi clan, which is dependent on the grandmother's clan (Ilongó of Lotángonda).

Nkundu
Pygmies FO4
Batswa

P M 563 588

The second case is somewhat more recent. It occurred at the beginning of the European penetration of the area. During the general upheaval at that time, the natives of Bosɛ̂ka village (Bilɛ̂ngi of Lingonju) took advantage of the absence of many adult men whom the soldiers had taken on an expedition against the Mbole. They were able to capture a woman named Nsombola and take her home with them. She loved one of the men of Bosɛ̂ka, and after many years, he "purchased" her for the price of two slaves. She lived there happily until quite recently, when she was overcome with a desire to return to her own race. (She leaves no descendants.)

In this second instance, then, the Nkundɔ́ bowed to the woman's wishes and, in accepting a bride price for Nsombola, gave in to the inevitable. This example shows that they can be flexible in their customary requirements if the situation warrants it.

Nevertheless, there have been no admirers or imitators of these exceptional cases, and the opposition against unions between the two races remains firm. Mixtures are not desired. The position which the hybrid family of Bakao occupies in the village of Lotɛ̂ngonda is highly significant. For it is an exception to the rule applicable to such cases, namely, that a child who has no legitimate father is incorporated into his mother's clan. The descendants of Bakao and Njalɛ́ are dependents of Lotɛ̂ngonda and are a part of it politically, but [243] they are not included in the kin group. For they have inherited a Bilɛ̂ngi nature from their father, and therefore, contrary to the logic usually applied, they have not become relatives of their ancestress. Here, too, the "racial principle" has prevailed against common law.

P M [851]

P M 563 588 595

Nor does one hear of temporary relationships or concubinage between them. I know only of one instance; its outcome was not happy, and it did not invite imitators. It happened around 1913. A certain polygamist, Lokɔ́ta of Bokeke (Bombwanja) fell in love with the wife of Bonkingɔ́, who at the present time is headman of Bosɔ̂ola (Batswɛ́ of Ntɔ́mbɛ́, Bombwanja). He became the laughing stock of the entire region, but because of his love, it did not deter him. In his own household, however, the situation was more serious. One of his wives (Ambânsele) soon left him. The others refused him their bodies

P
m
563
588
[575] and prepared for divorce. Consequently, Lokŏta was obliged to give up his unreasonable love, and in the end everything was set to rights. (1)

1. No children were born as a result of that relationship.

Instances of mixing have occurred because of colonization, outside the usual environment, between Batswá and members of tribes which are not acquainted with this race. At the Bokúma Mission there lives a Botswa woman of the Ekonda who was taken away by foreign soldiers and had two children by a Mbole man. These children are held in contempt by both the Baoto and the Batswá in the vicinity, and they will only be able to marry if they settle in their mother's clan.

In the veterans' village of Ingende there lives a Botswa of Boflama (Bombwanja) who married an Urundi woman while he was a soldier in the war. She probably did not know her husband's race. They came to this region, and the marriage has proved to be excellent, and the wife has always remained deeply attached to her husband. Their five children are not treated with the slightest contempt. Their situation would undoubtedly [244] be different if they lived in truly native surroundings, where they would certainly be incorporated into the Batswá.

P
178
563
588 The introduction of the Batswá into the economic life of the Europeans and their training in it may favor, and result in, a mixing of the races. The wealth thus placed within their reach may serve to seduce some of the more lascivious or greedy Baoto women, particularly those who always hang about the centers, camps, and markets and in whom vice has extinguished all feelings of propriety and honesty. The danger increases when Batswá bachelors are hired as laborers for some purpose and sent far from home to do their work, especially if the proportion of married men in the group is insufficient.
P
178
164
563
588 This is not a description of an existing situation -- for the barrier between the two races is still impassable -- but of a possibility that is not out of the question, as an occurrence in 1932 would indicate. The

If a woman injures her husband during a quarrel he may not retaliate, for she is recognized as inferior and weaker than he. The husband's weapon is abstention from any food, drink, baths, etc., that she offers him. To re-establish peace she must pay a bɔ́ɔndɔ. Nevertheless, nowadays some impetuous men no longer like to observe these rules; they want to act with violence come what may. But they are strongly reprimanded by the old men, who maintain that it is unworthy of a man to retaliate against a weaker being. This traditional attitude of the Nkundɔ́ seems to me to indicate a sort of chivalrous nobility based on two feelings, justice and pride. It becomes more understandable when we know that similar conduct is [563] expected with regard to Batswa, inferiors, and subjugated clans (baulɛ́, sing. julɛ́) in their respective spheres. (1) Thus a Booto may

1. See below, Articles V, VI, and VII, 4, B.

not apply the law of retaliation to a Botswa. Under certain circumstances, a julɛ́ clan may, with impunity, take what they please from the banana groves of the master's clan, etc.

Note also that it is very much out of place for a man [282] to strike his wife or punish her in any way in the presence of her parents, [607] brothers, etc. In fact, this is a very grave offense. And, according to the code of honor, the brother (cousin, etc.) must pick up the glove and fight his brother-in-law to avenge the insult. In many cases the matter ends in a divorce. For such conduct takes away the combined feeling of modesty and embarrassment (nsɔ́nyi) that the two parties normally feel toward one another.

Finally, we must note that the various payments made as bɔ́ɔndɔ are included in the total amount of jɛ́ngí or nkɔmí, respectively.

In order to more clearly illustrate the Nkundɔ́ attitude concerning the relationship of husband and wife, it might be of interest to cite a few proverbs pertaining to the subjects discussed above:

1) Baníngí bakɔ́ndaka wɔ́jɔ́ ntaka: Lombɔ́mbɛ́ aɔ́kɔ́nda Ntelí la nganja, "All the others slap their wives (but) Lombɔ́mbɛ́ beats Ntelí with a stick." (This is a reference to a historical fact.)

595* that no one will see her. She lives in this house in the company
554 of her ebísa, her daughters, some female relatives, or even another of her husband's wives, who must wait on her, prepare food for her, etc., and who go out and enter freely. Her husband also enters at will and spends the usual number of nights with her. No other man is permitted to enter the enclosure.

During her period of seclusion, the bolúmbú may not do the slightest work. She does not wash with water, but only with palm oil. She walks only on mats. She is also exempt from mourning for her parents. (Compare with Chapter I, Part 1, Article II.)

When the period of seclusion comes to an end, the husband announces the coming-out feast. There is merrymaking, dancing, and drinking. Mats are spread from the door of [351] the hut of seclusion all the way to the middle of the street. The two men who brought the woman to the hut come again and, taking her by the arms at the entrance to the enclosure, lead her over the mats. The ceremony thus ends without further ado.

The bolúmbú is henceforth free and acts like any other woman except for the wearing of furs. She may work, draw water, cook, travel, visit her parents, etc. But her husband's
● [563] honor and his reputation as a rich man require that he give his
[567] bolúmbú one or several slaves, or Batswa, or -- as is more frequently done -- one or two bibísa, who are supposed to take
[357] care of her housework and thus free the princess.

595* Adultery with her -- after her seclusion -- is more
554 severely punished than misconduct with an ordinary woman as
937 regards the indemnity to be paid. But as a flagrant insult, it is
614 considered very serious indeed, not so much as an infringement or marital rights as an attack on the honor of the whole clan or group of clans involved. Thus, while adultery with a nkónde, for instance, is a private matter, arousing the husband's jealousy and anger, misconduct with a bolúmbú is a public offense. The whole clan is enraged -- for they believe that their honor has been attacked, and all the members together press for vengeance for

586x 682 and this was generally the case -- he did not kill him personally but assigned the task to someone else -- his son, his younger [563] brother, or nephew, etc. Preferably, he hired a Botswá. The price for this service was 20 copper rings, the sum of the bride price paid [672] for a Botswá woman. Nkundó law places the entire responsibility for an assassination and all its consequences upon the person who orders it performed. Certain of the Batswa specialized in this field. Among them (of those dependent on the Bombwanja) were Esenge of Bokengé, Mbólókó of Bombembe, Wai w'Itúmola of Bakoyó; Lúwá jw'Itómbengándá (died in 1933) also of Bakoyó; Botómba wá Lokio and Mpótó éy'Ilókó of Mbanja (still alive).

586x The scorned husband had still other means of taking revenge or obtaining indemnification. He made use of them only if the occasion was favorable or if he was not in a position [382] to go into expensive adventures such as a war or an assassination. They were the following:

3) Ikákelo: (1) A relative of his who was married into the

1. See Chapter III, Article VI.

unfaithful wife's clan could be prevented from returning to her husband.

4) The seizure of one of the wives of his recalcitrant father-in-law, or of one of the latter's relatives. This action is called by the generic term lowáála, which signifies "compensation." (2)

2. The woman who was seized was called nginda and her descendants, if there were any, were known as bonginda.

The prisoner was usually put in an etáka (a wooden fork fastened to the neck) (3) to prevent her flight and hasten the reimbursement of

3. See Chapter VI, Article VII, 4, A, b), (1).

[567] the bride price. If the matter was not settled she became a slave.

853 may not eat meat if the child is male, or fish if it is female, un-
262 til the child in question is grown and kills either an animal (or bird) or a fish, according to the case, and has given it to the victim of the accident. If the child dies young, the person is accused of having violated the prohibition and is obliged to pay a large indemnity. This extremity is not usually reached, however, for the one to whom the accident has befallen scrupulously keeps away from everything that might cause this sort of murder. Then, if death occurs and he has nothing with which to reproach himself, he can resort to an ordeal or to the verdict of a test based on superstition. In addition in villages that have Batswa, a woman of that
● [863] race must nurse the child for an instant after the accident before its mother gives it her breast again. [497]

6) The child is carried on the shoulder, and as soon as it is
854 capable of holding on, on the hip. It does not take many weeks for it to become accustomed to that position. When the mother has to hold it for a long period of time (during a march, on a trip, etc.), she puts it in a scarf-shoulder strap (lombě), made from creepers that are scraped and woven as for a mat, or from a cloth of raffia fibers, or even from a pelt (nowadays it is often made from a piece of European cloth). The scarf must be sturdy, for were it to tear and the infant fall, far-reaching consequences would result; all of that woman's subsequent children would be condemned to die in the mother's womb or during the period of nursing.

As the child grows it is sometimes carried astride the mother's back, either because she does not like to be separated from it, or because the tyranny of the little one forces her to keep it with her even during her work, errands, and even dances. She remedies this awkward situation if possible by resorting to the assistance of an older girl, a young niece or cousin, or a little boy from among the immediate kin.

When the child rests during the day, it is laid on an ordinary bed or on a movable bed (boánga), without any special arrangements. It has no difficulty sleeping soundly on such hard couches.

7) Weaning. Although a child is gradually accustomed
862 to solid food, it does not stop nursing. As it grows older, the nursing times are spaced farther and farther apart. But the child

862 does not really stop nursing till it is about two years old, and sometimes two and a half if it has a weak constitution.

Weaning is not accompanied by any ceremony or feast. In order to break the child's habit, the mother smears her nipples [824] with the sap of the lifété fruit (a kind of small sweet pimento or eggplant) or with a pimento-pepper extract (imbénga). Sometimes she leaves the child with some relative (daughter, sister, etc.) for a time [498] while she lives elsewhere.

As we have seen above, after weaning, the ekelé-bokeka period comes to an end for the mother, and her infidelities no longer have repercussions on the life of her child.

[853] 8) If the mother dies while the infant is still being nursed, [583] the task of nursing is turned over to some woman who is disposed to undertake it even a Botswa, and there always is one. After the child is weaned the woman is suitably recompensed. The use of [235] goat's milk is unknown.

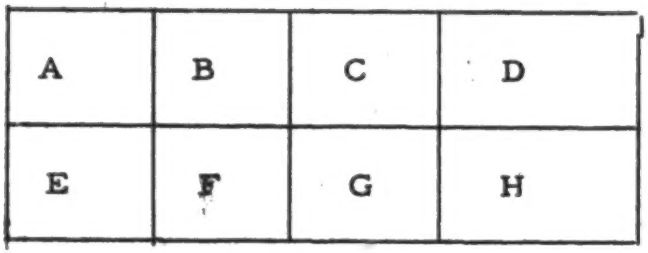
854 751 9) Young children frequently suffer convulsions. This illness [053] is thought to be caused by hawks, and for that reason it is called mpulú (bird). The Nkundó try to prevent it by hanging an amulet around children's necks; it is usually the clavicular triangle of a hen's carcass. In addition they know a remedy whose purpose is to strengthen the nerves: the child is laid on a mat stretched out anywhere on the roof of the hut. An eyewash (bolóf) is prepared from the sap of leaves from the litóyansombo bush and extract of mbólé (fruit of the bosoombó). Using a leaf shaped into a horn, a few drops are put into the child's eyes. Then the father or some other relative pulls out the mat from under the child and lifts it several times, shouting: tá tá tá.

856 10) No special importance is attached to teething. But a child whose upper teeth come in before the lower ones (a defect called ingondo) is considered abnormal. Therefore he is forbidden to eat the first fruits of hunting or fishing in an enclosure (mpao), lest the latter lose their productivity.

2: Hulstaert
101, 131, 563, 619

Mongo FO32

/The division of sections in the end map is as follows:/



2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

101
131
563
619

[End Map (A)]

2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

101
131
563
619

I B E
BONYANGA
AKAALA
WANGATA
BONKOSO
BOMBWANJA
BONGILI
IONDA
NTOMBA(WANG
LIOKÓ
LIOMBO
FLANDRIA
Belingo
Mbongo
Loolo
Jwafa
Bokuma
Bokanda
Bolima
Bokuma
Bokakya
Bokaya
Bokalé
Bokuli
Bokilo
Bokilo
Bokilo

2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

101
131
563
619

[End Map (C)]

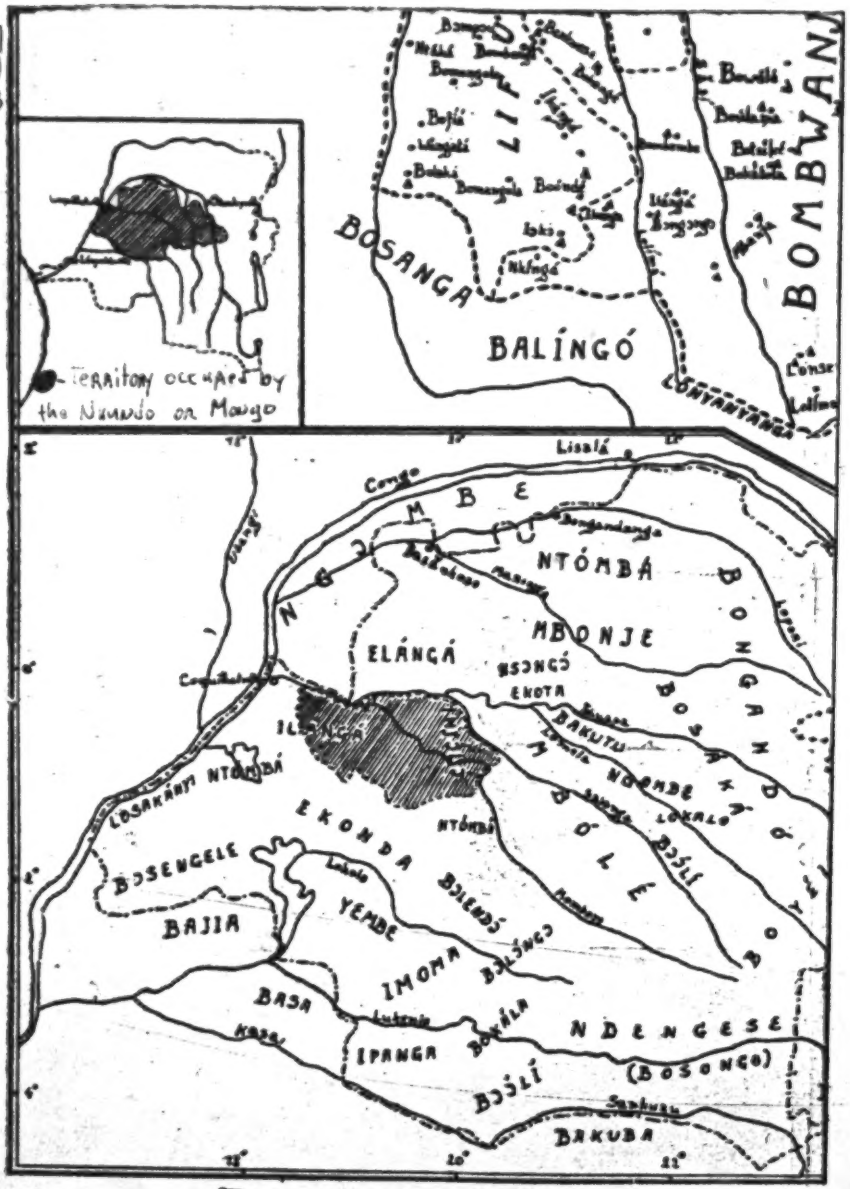
2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

101
131
563
649

[End Map(D)]

2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

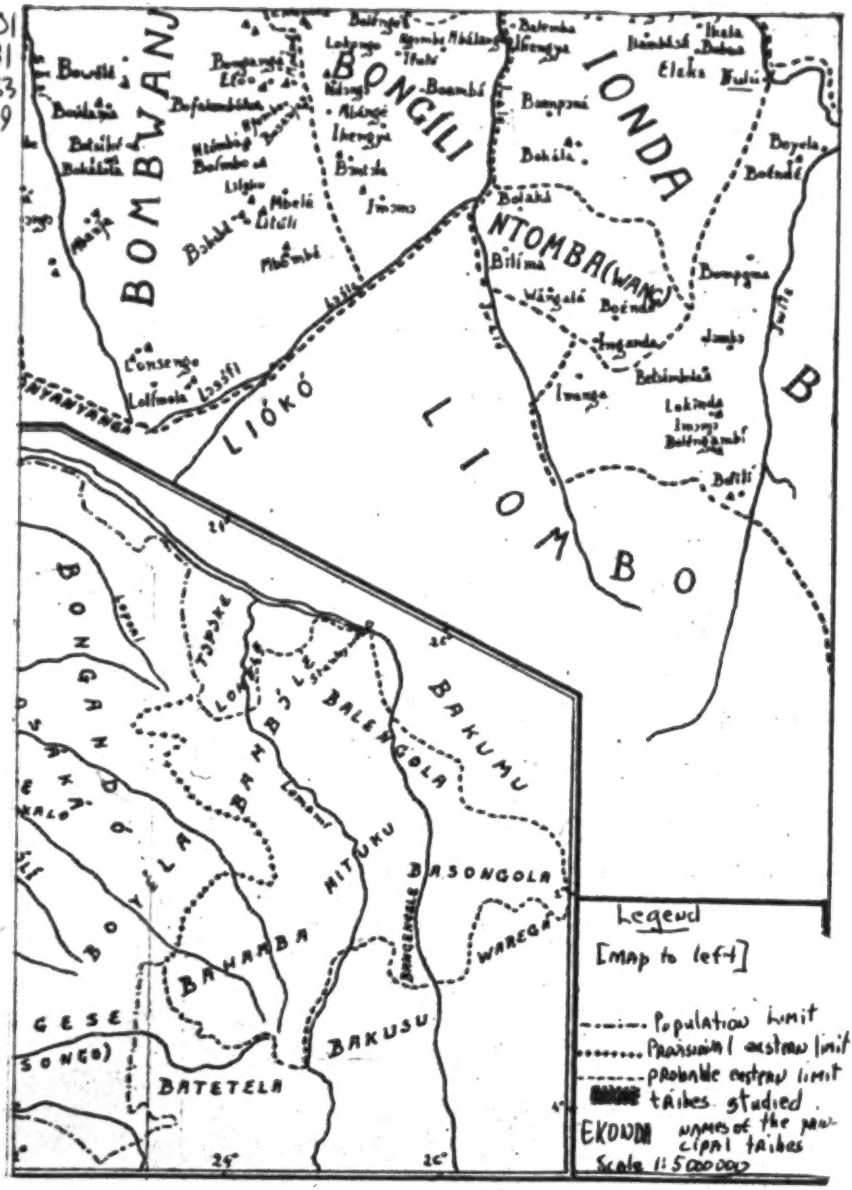
101
131
563
619




[End Map (E)]

2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

101
131
● 563
619



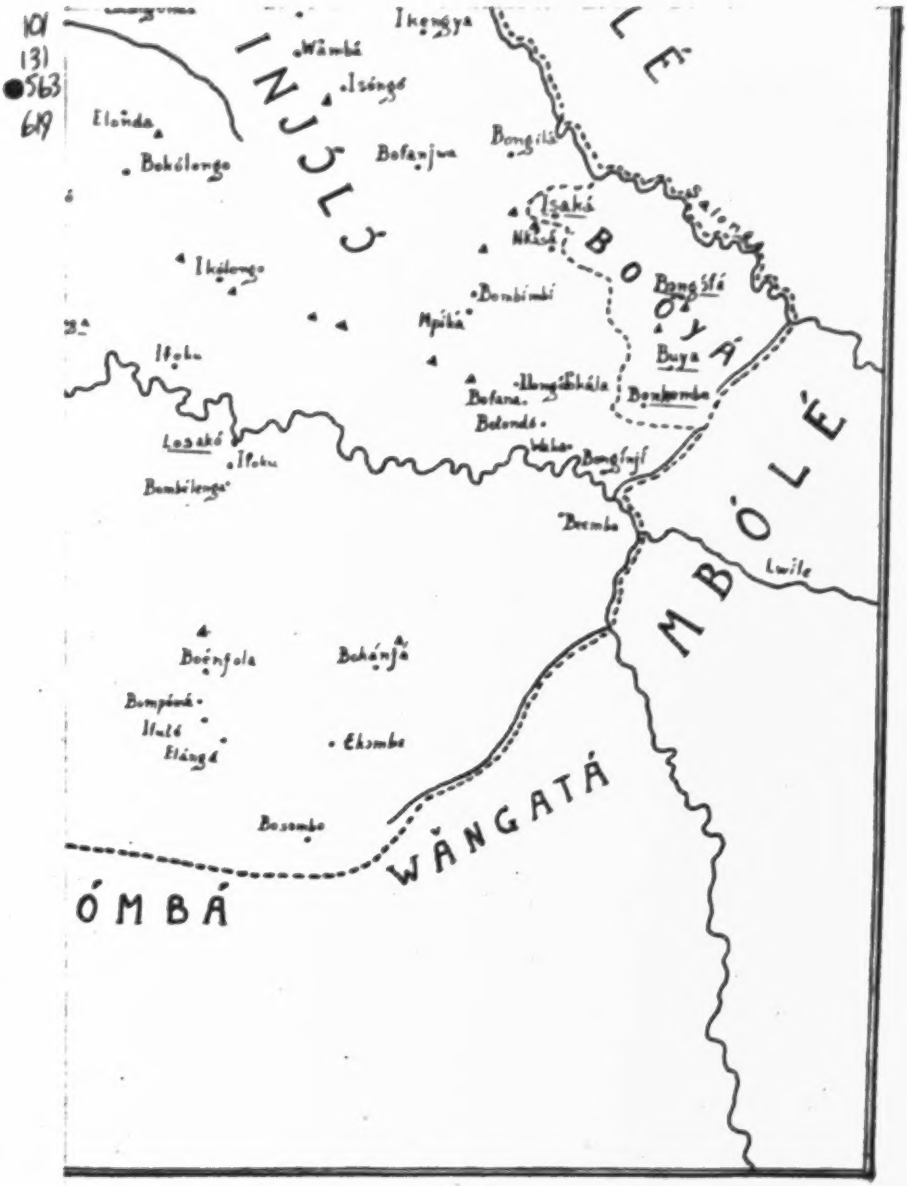

[End Map (F)]

2:Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32
Nkundu

101
131
563
619

[End Map (G)]

2: Hulstaert M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FO32 Mongo FO32 Nkundu




[End Map(H)]

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba



fear of death would deter him from such baseness. Another sign of the chosen successor is some untoward experience, such, for example, as finding cowrie shells (worn by *nkumu*) in a trap in the forest or a net that had been put out to catch fish.

*Nkema Akuke*, whether the first of his line or a man succeeding in the office, bears the emblems of his rank. He wears an *ilolombo* (a branch of a special bush) stuck into his belt on the right side and hanging downwards. The special hat, *montolo*, worn by *nkumu* is not yet his to wear, but he wears an ordinary skin hat known as *lopopo*, which is the mark of any elder. This hat may be ornamented with feathers if so desired.

When *Nkema Akuke* decides that he has acquired sufficient wealth to enable him properly to claim the right of being made an *nkumu*, he begins his preparatory arrangements. *Mbili*, a mixture of charcoal with some sticky substance, is smeared over his body with plantain leaves. All ornamented clothing is discarded and a single cloth woven from raffia, and known as *molele*, is worn. He refuses to sit on the benches usually used and instead sits on the bare earth. All this is explained as an attempt on the part of the man about to be raised to the office of *nkumu* to be different from others, a man apart, separate, peculiar, not partaking in the ordinary interests and affairs of his fellow men.

*Nkema Akuke* now leaves his own village accompanied by all his wives and children, and also by a singer, *nyemba*, who is paid to sing his praises, and by several male Batwa (pygmies), up to half a dozen in number, known as *ntotii* because of their duty of blowing gourds and producing sounds which indicate praise of the great man. This party makes the round of villages wherever relatives are found, and the announcement is made that *Nkema Akuke* is about to become an *nkumu*. This pilgrimage accomplished, a 'doctor' (*nkanga*) is visited by the aspirant to office, who seeks by magic to discover whether it is the propitious time for the ceremony of installation. The whole company retires to the private enclosure at the rear of the house belonging to the *nkanga* chosen, this being the place where he performs his wonders. The *nkanga* resorts to *nsingo*, that particular branch of magic which has to do with reasons for strange and unaccountable phenomena.[1] *Nkema Akuke* now seeks some sign as confirmation of his determination to claim his office at this time. Some native pepper may be wrapped in a leaf or merely covered by it, and left within sight of all, and upon being opened it may be found to have turned into salt, or perhaps it may be some earth that is thus turned to salt. Or a cock may be placed upon *Nkema Akuke's* head and covered with a basket and thus left for some time. Upon removing the basket it may be discovered that an egg has been laid. All such tests, if successful, will be regarded as indications that it really is time for *Nkema Akuke* to assume the office of *nkumu*, but if the test fails he will usually go ahead with his plans anyhow, fearing the shame that would come to him should he go back to his home after having made the triumphant round of his relatives' homes. However, should he act thus, and he most certainly will, he knows that his days are numbered,

[1] If a man's fields do not produce and he cannot understand why, he will resort to *nsingo*. If it is suspected, for example, that the trouble is caused by someone making 'medicine', an arrow shaft is put into a small hole in the ground, and at each name mentioned, the arrow can be pulled out if the person is innocent, but remains stuck fast in the hole at the mention of the guilty name.

G24 An *nkumu* can never walk alone, but must always be accompanied by others, and on no occasion whatsoever may he run. Even though he never washes, if he is out [481] in the rain and sees everybody else hurrying for shelter, he will not quicken his pace. [513] His movements must be slow and deliberate. The *nkumu* never sleeps alone; waking and sleeping he is attended by someone. But apart from this he is free to go where he wishes. The *nkumu* is not indiscriminate, as others may be, in his private habits, but [514] must use his own latrine at all times, and if travelling must have his own latrine in [556] each place where he stays. The inland *nkumu* frequently take advantage of this custom by hiding their accumulated brass rods at the bottom of a freshly dug latrine. Such hidden wealth will be acquired by an inheritor at the decease of the *nkumu*.

In speaking of himself the *nkumu* never refers to himself by his title but always by his own name.

G24 The couch upon which the *nkumu* sits or reclines during the daytime may not be shared indiscriminately with others, but those permitted to sit upon it at the same 352 time as the *nkumu* are *maomi*, women, and Batwa. The reservation of this couch for [562] the use of the *nkumu* is not surprising, but the exceptions are. One explanation given ● 563] was that women and Batwa are not *bato ba zet*, persons in particular; they do not count for anything in the social life of the community; they are not really 'people'. [672] Another explanation was that they do not pay fines, this being tantamount to saying that they are exempt from laws and therefore cannot break laws even by doing what would be for others an illegal act. The stool of the *nkumu*, however, has closer restrictions in the manner of its use. Besides the *nkumu* only two others may sit upon it, *Nsomo* and *Mpenge*. It is always carried by one of his wives, though not necessarily by any special one.

G24 The restrictions concerning the food of the *nkumu* are many. He may eat food only in his own house, or, if on a journey, in one given over for his use. He may not 262 enter another house to partake of food even if invited to do so. Likewise the *nkumu* may not eat in the forest, or eat or drink anywhere along the road when on a journey, but must wait until he arrives at a village and has a house at his disposal in order to partake of food and drink. He never 'sleeps with hunger'; even if a wife or child should die causing him great sorrow he must partake of food before going to sleep. [765] The Bonginda *nkumu* must never go into mourning, and death must be ignored by them, but the inland *nkumu* are permitted to mourn. All food carried to an *nkumu* must be covered, this rule even applying to water. Food must not be placed in a basket with high sides (*eboko*), but in a shallow one (*moyala*), and no food that has been kept overnight in a pot may be eaten by him: swelling of the abdomen will result. Various foods are taboo, among these all fast-moving snakes, though slow- [824] moving ones may be eaten; light-coloured palm-nuts may not be eaten, and a variety of yam known as *monkiki* is shunned, for it is with the tough stems of the *monkiki* that the dying body of the *nkumu* will be bound to ensure the sitting posture necessary for burial.

G24 Among regulations roughly classed as social, we have already covered several in [623] references above, and have referred to the *nkumu* in council. It may be added here that he is expected to agree with the majority of the councillors and not fall out with them. [689] The rules affecting the *nongo* of the *nkumu* are accompanied by severe penalties. There must not be any fighting; if anger is aroused to the point of blows the antagonists

literally that the deceased has hanged the heart, the former is used of a tree which leans over and falls from a great cut at its base.

On the announcement of the death, an expert drummer drums out the news. There will be at least four drums of the type known as *lokuku*, and a *nunga*.[1] The four drums are called by the names, *Epanda*, having the 'biggest voice', that is a deep bass note, *Mongoyo*, having a higher note, *Mongonda*, a high pitched note, and *Monkoto*, having a very high penetrating note. To these four drums others are added; if the *nkumu* himself did not possess sufficient, they would be borrowed from the surrounding villages, and their notes matched with those of the first three drums, being beaten with them in their turn. *Monkoto* is beaten simultaneously with *Epanda*, giving a rhythmic tattoo. When the news of the death has been sent out on *Epanda*, the funeral drumming commences, as follows:

*Mongonda.* Botiangunu w'Amba lokolo,
*Mongoyo.* Ntsala ikita, otongonoko,
*Epanda.* Tokund' ibenge molom' o nyama,
Ombolekeke mmenge,
Lobanga lolenda ntondo,
Bikeku bilenda lobola.
*Nunga.* Tobilake nkoi nkonge,
Tobilake nkoi nkonge, &c.

The English and the interpretation are as follows:

*Mongonda.* A scattering of Amba, the snail. (The mother of twins, always called Amba, here gives her name to the snail because of her prolific progeny, which, upon being introduced to the world, scatter, while the mother dies. So the death of the *nkumu* will cause a scattering of his many wives and children.)

*Mongoyo.* Feathers fall; pick them up. (That is to say, for your arrow shafts, for if you don't, and come back later, the wind will have scattered them and you won't find them. So while the *nkumu* was alive it was the time for his children to learn his teachings so that when palavers came after his death they would be well acquainted with his wisdom and know how to settle them.)

*Epanda.* We are burying the *ibenge*, husband of animals, You have just eaten *mmenge*, The chin looks up at the ridge pole, The jaw bones look up at the sky. (The *ibenge* is an animal much prized for its fat meat; the *nkumu* always gets his share when it is killed, and the skin is made into carrying straps for infants, and into belts. Batwa are prohibited the use of it for any purpose. It is therefore fitting to liken the *nkumu* to the *ibenge*. *Mmenge* (sing. *lobenge*) is the equivalent of a snack. When a woman brings her cassava from the swamp where it has been soaking for several days, her husband may be too hungry to wait the long hours required to cook it, so to appease his hunger his wife takes a piece or two of the unprepared root, splits it in two, places salt between, wraps it in a *lokombe* leaf and roasts it in the hot ashes, where it is quickly cooked. So the *nkumu* just had time to eat a few *mmenge*; he didn't wait for the big cooking; his life was suddenly cut off.)

*Nunga.* Don't pull out the leopard's eyelashes. (That is, while he is alive; now he is dead one can disregard his power.)

[1] A *lokuku* is a slit gong made from a hollowed log. Its two notes are produced by striking the two lips of the slit. A *nunga* is a hollowed log, open at one end, across which is stretched a vellum hide.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba



no compulsion. If one of the contracting parties fails to fulfil its pledges in this matter of giving part of the kill, or in anything else, the aggrieved party may call the council together. This consists not only of members of the *molombo* and *ekopo*, but of all elders of the village or villages connected with this particular one. The party judged in the wrong, whether *ekopo* or *molombo*, will be fined, the injured party receiving its share, and both parties will be charged to live together harmoniously and observe their contracts.

The power of the *nkumu* was apparently limited, and did not supersede that of the *monemu mokonda*. When trials came up, the aggrieved party might go either to the *monemu mokonda* or to the *nkumu*. If it was necessary to call the village elders together about it, both these authorities were present at the hearing. First the young men of the group were allowed to give their verdict, then the old men, after that *monemu mokonda* (or the *molomi o ele*), and finally the *nkumu* was given the privilege of the last word. He would comment on the opinions of each of the judges, criticizing one young man, commending another, and then giving his own verdict, at which the group would assent by saying, 'Even so, grandfather'. The whole group of judges would then fix the fines, a double portion of which went to the *nkumu*.

The actual manual labour which an *nkumu* may do excludes anything endangering life or limb, or requiring agility and speed. He may clear the bush for his gardens: this is a man's work. He may take part in the building of his houses, but may do no high work, and, among the inland groups, it is the work of the Batwa to put the roof on for him. The *nkumu* may also prepare pitfalls for catching game, but cannot engage in any other type of hunting or do any fishing. Digging a grave is prohibited, for, as we shall see, everything pertaining to death must be ignored by the *nkumu*.

Other rules affecting the daily life of the *nkumu* may be roughly divided into three: those affecting his person, those having to do with his food, and social regulations.

One of the great points of observance in the first class of regulations is the importance of the *montolo*. The *nkumu* must on no account be seen during daylight hours with an uncovered head. If he wishes relief from the cumbersome *montolo* he may take it off in the darkness of his house and put on an ordinary hat made of skins, and when night falls he may walk where he will bareheaded if he so desires. The skin hat, known as *lonku*, may be made from two animals only, in the case of an *nkumu*, one being the *nkulopa*, a species of antelope with light-coloured hair, and the other the *jyolo*, an animal resembling a beaver. The skin of the *nkulopa* may be used by anyone, but the *jyolo* is reserved for the *nkumu* only with one exception. The skin of the *jyolo* may also be used for the carrying strap for infants known as *nyonko*, which is worn over one shoulder in bandoleer fashion. For the *nkumu* the skin of the *jyolo* is limited to the informal hat, *lonku*, and for making into the *lokoto*, a pouch used for carrying small objects and worn like a sporran. As a corollary to the importance of the *montolo* may be noted the importance attached to the head of the *nkumu*, which must never be seen uncovered in daylight.

The Bonginda *nkumu* never wash in the daytime, but may wash at night with hot water. The inland *nkumu* never wash. Even the Bonginda *nkumu* never wash their heads, and no *nkumu* ever cuts his hair. If the *nkumu* becomes too greatly inconvenienced, one of his wives may delouse his head, but only within the privacy of the house, by the light that enters the rear opening.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba



must go to the *mankoko* for their fight, this being the location of the houses belonging to the sons of the *nkumu*. The penalty for breaking this law is a fine, and if no fine were forthcoming hanging used to be the alternative. If a quarrel arises elsewhere and one party wishes to avoid fighting, he may retire to the *mongo* and thus be safe. No trees in the *mongo* may be climbed. There are, however, privileged classes exempt from all such rules, and these embrace a good many people. Thus, the mother of twins, twins, Batwa, *mami*, and all members of the *mulombo* and *ekopo* are exempt from the laws of the *mongo*. If any of these commit acts which are illegal for those coming under the law, they are not held guilty, but their actions will not be condoned; they will be considered breaches of good conduct, and will be dealt with informally; the parties will be quietly reprimanded, and adjured to observe the proprieties of conduct. For outsiders breaking the laws of the *mongo*, what corresponds to a warrant is necessary. It is necessary to catch the culprit in the act and hale him before the *nkumu*. The *nkumu* himself cannot do this, nor can any of the *ekopo*; it must be done by one of the *mulombo*, and so if the *nkumu* sees someone infringing the law he will try to get one of the *mulombo* on the spot in a hurry in order to catch the offender.

In war,[1] it is the *mulomi o nkumu* who is most active in preparations, but the *nkumu* will accompany his party to battle, keeping well in the rear, and surrounded by good fighters. He does not wear his *mantolo* but puts on the informal hat. If an *nkumu* were captured, he would never be tortured or killed as were other prisoners, unless he specifically sought such a fate. He could be ransomed, and his captors would beseech him to let his people ransom him, but in many cases an *nkumu* would invite death rather than endure the shame of being yielded up as a prisoner of war.

An *nkumu* is always addressed by a double clap of the hands, and will not reply to anyone rude enough to speak to him first. In answer to the clap he replies with a word of wisdom expressed in an aphorism or proverb. Such a reply, however, is common to all elders, who have their favourite aphorisms ready for any who pay them special honour. Anything the *nkumu* says must be answered not by the customary *ndo bulo* (even so) which ordinary people use, but with the special word, *bingo*, which is reserved exclusively for replying to an *nkumu*, and means the same thing.

When the hour of death approaches, an *nkumu* is attended by his Batwa. It is a rule that he must not die a natural death, and near the end, while he is still conscious and can still speak, all 'free men' clear out and leave the Batwa pygmies to their task of tying the *nkumu* very tightly with the fibrous yam vines known as *mankiki*. Often this secure lashing in the sitting posture, known as *tilima*, is sufficient to finish the *nkumu* off, but sometimes the work is expedited by twisting his neck.[2] Then it is announced that he is dead, *nakilwa*, this being in contradistinction to the customary phrase *nakamu nakoko* used of the death of ordinary people. While the latter means

[1] Owing to the lack of tribal cohesion, warfare was not on any considerable scale. The method of warfare consisted in sending groups of young men to fight foes, the elders only joining in when one side began to get the worst of the fray. Victors and vanquished in such fights were designated 'husband' and 'wife' respectively, and members of the one group were free to come and go in the villages of the other, and even to help themselves to food. In fiction were 'husband' and 'wife' were supposed to combine against their common foes.

[2] Besides *nkumu*, elderly and rich men, fathers and mothers of twins, and twins are buried in the *tilima* or sitting posture, in contradistinction to the *nsongo* position which is the recumbent one used for ordinary people and slaves.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba



This funeral drumming is kept up for a long time, off and on for days, and is very stirring in its rhythm. While it is going on, the elders congregate in an *olanga*. They fast and have nothing to do with their wives during this time. The *okapo* is mourning, and the *nsilembe* may be likewise mourning, but for the others it is a time of rejoicing, and also of the relaxing of moral restraints. It is an occasion for dancing by both Batwa and 'freemen', the former regarding this as a time for special rejoicing, for the *nkumu* was their master and now he is dead they are no longer under restraint. They are free to take any of their master's goods and even to snatch blankets off the corpse. Men and women do not dance together; the women, taking some of their husbands' weapons, go off in one direction, and the men, arrayed in finery, dance at the other end of the village.

While the *nkumu* is still unburied and the drumming is going on, the *nsilembe* look for a successor among the *okapo*. Often this man will, as we have seen, have already been designated. The *nsilembe*, Batwa, and others in the village make up a party, and attired in war finery go off with their weapons as though after a man they wished to kill. As they go they sing:

*Nkumbe w'ampiita olimbo*
*We olale mo nlo?*
Hawk, thou hast destroyed the nest,
Where art thou going to sleep?

Before catching the real successor they catch one or another in fun, singing this song. The man of course refuses to be *nkumu*, and the point of the song is that because of his refusal the *okapo* no longer fulfils its function of supplying the *nsilembe* with *nkumu* and therefore ceases to be of any use to them. If this man by refusing thus destroys the family nest, where will they sleep?

Finally, after this fun, the real successor is caught, his face daubed with black, and the group sing:

*Bale bow-o, kumbi olulu.*
The cunning animal is hiding, reveal the tortoise.

Thus the new *nkumu*, like a cunning animal, is hiding, but when discovered, like the tortoise, he will not try to run away. The whole group conducts the new *nkumu* to the *ifumu* and sits all night guarding him. Earlier on the day of the actual interment of the dead *nkumu*, the new one is installed with ceremonies as already described.

On the day the *nkumu* dies his people scatter to other villages to look for slaves for the executions on the day of the burial. Slave-owners or husbands of unwanted wives ask quietly how much money there is for the man or woman, accept the agreed amount, and tell the buyers to go quietly and catch the slave or wife before anything is suspected and an escape is made. In this connexion we may note two classes of wives, *bopika* and *ibato*. A third class, *boumba*, acquired by the payment of a very small bride price, was not nearly so common formerly as at present and may be passed by. A *bopika* was a slave wife acquired by capture in war or stolen. If loved by her husband she will take her place practically on an equality with the members of the village, but she may be killed, for she is her husband's possession, 'his money' is the native expression. An *ibato* is a wife for whom a very high bride price has been paid, obliging her family to give wives to the other family in perpetuity, supplying

614 splits up only after the death of the ancestor to whom the new groups can be traced back. The descendants of a patriarch split up into the groups of his sons only when these groups have reached the necessary size. Considering the size of even the smallest Ekonda groups this can occur only after several generations. By this time, however, the common patriarch and his sons, the ancestors of the new subgroups, are dead. Thus, at the present time we find a tendency to split in the Ndong'i-mpinga group; the ancestors of the two groups which are now in the process of forming died about 1920. Most probably these two groups, so far as their age relationship to one another is concerned, will not grade themselves according to the relationship of these "tribal ancestors," but according to the relationship of the "patriarchs" under whom the separation takes place. The exact process of such a split of A-groups cannot be established afterwards through questions; it can only be observed on the spot while it is taking place.

In the following chapters we shall describe the groups of the various ranks and their characteristics.

## Groups of Rank A

These groups consist of as many as forty persons. In most
563 cases, a group of Batwá-Pygmoids is part of such a group. Having the function of helots, they belong to the A-group of their masters, and this membership is passed on through the male line in the same manner as among their masters. Excepting Pygmoids, the oldest member of the A group is the bomólé bokonda, the "owner of the land"; he is the personification of all authority within the group and its representative in the group's dealings with outsiders. He is the only person who is completely in charge. All members of the group are in a father-son relationship to him [193] even if the younger members -- as counted by generations -- have the rank of father in relation to him. He administers and issues the group's treasury of objects used for buying a bride. He also disposes of the landed property of the group.